

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7960

INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 4677

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TECH, IN, CA

SUBJECT: NEW ROUND OF INDO-CANADIAN NUCLEAR TALKS

REF: NEW DELHI 0657

1. THE CANADIANS AND THE INDIANS ARE DISCUSSING A NEW ROUND OF NUCLEAR TALKS, BUT OUR SOURCES HERE DISAGREE ON DATES AND SUBSTANCE TO BE COVERED. FROM THE INDIAN SIDE WE HEARD THAT THE CANADIANS PLANNED TO SEND A TEAM OF TECHNICAL EXPERTS TO BOMBAY ON APRIL 21 TO DISCUSS THE RESUMPTION OF CANADIAN EQUIPMENT TO INDIA UNDER THE RAJASTHAN ATOMIC POWER PROJECT (RAPP) AGREEMENT. NOT SO, REPORTS A CANADIAN HIGH COMMISSION SOURCE. HE SAYS DATES HAVE BEEN SUGGESTED TO THE INDIANS, BUT THEY HAVE NOT ACCEPTED THEM. CANADIAN ALSO ASSERTS THE TALKS WILL BE AT THE POLITICAL LEVEL. HE ALSO ADDS THAT ANY AGREEMENT ON RAPP WHICH MIGHT COME FIRST AS A PART OF AN OVERALL UNDERSTANDING WOULD HAVE TO INCLUDE TIGHTER SAFEGUARDS ON RAPP. THIS MIGHT, SAID CANADIAN, TAKE THE FORM OF AN EXCHANGE OF LETTERS. CANADIAN ALSO CAUTIONED THAT ANY INDO-CANADIAN AGREEMENT WOULD BE SUBJECT TO CABINET APPROVAL, AND LATTER BODY IS "STILL CONFIDENTIAL

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BLOODY MINDED ON THIS SUBJECT." INDIAN POSTION IS THAT

WHILE GOI WOULD BE HAPPY TO HAVE RESUMED FLOW OF EQUIPMENT TO RAPP, IT DOES NOT INTEND TO ACCEPT ANY BROAD RESTRICTIONS ON ITS NUCLEAR POLICY. GOI FURTHER ARGUES THAT RAPP IS ALREADY FULLY SAFEGUARDED UNDER BOTH BILATERAL AND IAEA TRILATERAL SAFEGUARDS.

2. THE INDIANS WOULD CLEARLY LIKE TO SEE SUPPLIES TO RAPP RESUMED, AND MAY FOR THIS PURPOSE BE WILLING TO GIVE SOME KIND OF WRITTEN ASSURANCES SUCH AS WERE PROVIDED IN THE EXCHANGE OF LETTERS ON TARAPUR. THE GAP IN THE OVER-ALL POSITION BETWEEN CANADA AND INDIA, HOWEVER, SEEMS AS WIDE AS EVER. BOTH GOVERNMENTS WOULD APPARENTLY LIKE TO SEE THEIR RELATIONS RESTORED TO THEIR FORMER LEVEL, AND THE INDIANS SO ASSERT PUBLICLY IN THEIR 1974 ANNUAL FOREIGN POLICY REPORT. BOTH ARE, HOWEVER, ANSWERABLE TO PARLIAMENTARY CRITICS WHO HAVE FIXED IDEAS. FROM HERE WE STILL DO NOT SEE SIGNS OF THE FLEXIBILITY AND INGENUITY THAT WILL FACILITATE EARLY COMPROMISE.
SAXBE

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